‘B’ for Blane and ‘B’ for Budget: The Productivity, and Narrativity, of Warner Bros.’ Torchy Blane Series (1937–1939)

Helen Hanson, University of Exeter

Introduction to Torchy: The Action of Storytelling

> ‘She’s shrewd and aggressive without being too tough. She’s beguiling as well as resourceful. The character whips up a taste for ensuing adventures’.[1]

Leaping from a taxi to pursue a train, and jumping aboard to pursue her quarry and nail her story, Torchy Blane burst onto the screen. The film in which this occurs, *Smart Blonde* (Frank McDonald,1937) introduces the series of nine Torchy films produced at Warner Bros. between 1937 and 1939. Each centres upon Torchy the fast-talking, independent ‘lady newshound’ as she ‘scoops to conquer’, and her relationship with her long-suffering fiancé, police lieutenant Steve McBride.[2]

Torchy was played by Glenda Farrell, and was partnered by Barton McLane as Steve, in seven of the nine Torchy films: *Smart Blonde* (#1); *Fly-Away Baby* (#2) (Frank McDonald, 1937); *Torchy Blane, The Adventurous Blonde* (#3) (Frank MacDonald 1937); *Blondes at Work* (#4) (Frank McDonald, 1938); *Torchy Gets Her Man* (#6) (William Beaudine, 1938); *Torchy Blane in Chinatown* (#7) (William Beaudine, 1939) and *Torchy Runs for Mayor* (#8) (Ray McCarey, 1939). In the fifth film of the series, *Torchy Blane in Panama* (#5) (William Clemens, 1938), Farrell was replaced by Lola Lane playing Torchy opposite Paul Kelly as Steve, and in the ninth and final film of the series, *Torchy Blane…Plays with Dynamite* (#9) (Noel Smith, 1939) Jane Wyman took the role of Torchy with Allen Jenkins playing Steve.

Smart Blonde opens *in media res*, and typifies the briskly paced narratives of the Torchy series; the films are intensely event-full and are centred upon Torchy's actions as the central protagonist. In each of the films a storyline of detection is put into purposeful, productive tension with a subplot of romance. Torchy repeatedly competes with Steve to solve a crime and secure a story scoop for her newspaper, *The Star*. In all of the 'adventures' comprising the series, Torchy is the agentic force driving plot developments, and her character is active and self-determining.

The Torchy Blane adventures were highly popular, both critically and commercially due to the quality of their characterisation, as noted in the *Variety* review quoted above, and is also due to the skilful exploitation of series narrative structuring by the screenwriters who worked on them.[3] Torchy repeatedly delights on the screen because she effortlessly, and sassily, transcends the usual constraints to women's active agency in studio era Hollywood narratives. She is an ace reporter, respected by her editor at *The Star*, Maxie and she investigates 'juicy' stories of crimes and political intrigue. Torchy is stylish and whip-smart, but still relatable, she is adored by Steve McBride, loved like a sister by police driver Gahagen (Tom Kennedy), she inspires a competitive awe in her peers, and she is rather feared by Police Chief McTavish (Frank Shannon), who tries to curtail Torchy's sleuthing and to keep her away from police business. She is uncontainable and irrepressible. The story world in which Torchy is placed is structured by her ambitions and it permits her to exercise her agency. As a working woman she enjoys independence, but her adventures have a socially stabilising frame: she is betrothed to Steve. Socially and culturally Torchy is poised between not quite being a single girl and not yet confined by the conventions of being a wife.[4] In short, we might say that as a female character she is empowered by an excellent situation.

It is the relationship between Torchy's stable story situation which overarches all nine films, and the variety, novelty and productivity of each episode's plot that I want to focus on in this article. The Torchy Blane series provides a case study which enables us to analyse the intersecting logic between industry, form, gender and representation.

'B' for Budget and the Commercial Logic of the Series Film

In terms of their budget, production schedule, distribution and exhibition the Torchy Blane films were 'B' films. As Brian Taves, Tino Balio and Kyle Edwards have established, the 'B' film constituted the biggest category of production of the Hollywood studios from the mid 1930s to the early 1940s, and 'B' films were key to the studios' revenue.[5] The 'B' film, and a stratified approach to production and exhibition, was a strategic response of the film market to the economic downturn of the 1930s. Stratifying films into As and Bs allowed the Majors to organise production and to exercise a 'differential pricing policy'. Class-B films were rented to exhibitors at a flat fee, while Class-A pictures were charged at a percentage, giving the Majors the ability to plan and predict their revenues with precision.[6]

Warner Bros. were prolific producers of 'B' films, between 1935 to 1940 roughly half the studio's output were pictures. 'B' production was organised by Producer Bryan Foy who headed up a special unit dedicated to 'B's.[7] The production of 'B' films in series was a common strategy; it allowed studios to exploit the affordances of seriality by using familiar characters, repeated scenarios and narrative continuities to embed series in the habitual moviegoing of the period.[8]

Plotting Torchy Blane

The character of Torchy Blane originated in print, in the form of the male hard-drinking ace crime reporter Kennedy of the Free Press, in a series of popular stories by Frederick Nebel. Nebel's story 'No Hard Feelings', published in the detective magazine *Black Mask* in February 1936, provided the basis for *Smart Blonde*, but the screenwriting team substantially adapted the scenario by developing the character of Torchy and establishing the series' situation.[9] *Smart Blonde* set the pattern for the Torchy Blane adventures, and contained key aspects which were exploited across the series and used to produce coherence: an overt plot, a race between Torchy and the police to solve the crime, and a restabilising closure which restores the central situation and enables Torchy's next adventure. The series is tonally mixed, blending crime melodrama with comedy and balancing sensational narrative events within each film with the continuity in the overall series situation.

Smart Blonde inaugurates the strategy of intertwining a storyline of detection with one of romance between Torchy and Steve. Both characters seek to uncover the killer of a businessman but deploy different investigative strategies. Steve's approach follows the money: he investigates rival bidders competing to control the businessman's interests. By contrast, Torchy's sleuthing focuses on the personal relationships of the parties. By questioning an observant hat-check girl, Dixie (Jane Wyman) working at a nightclub frequented by the suspects, Torchy uncovers and exposes a pair of grifters who are trying to frame one of the suspects and resolves the murder. The final scene of *Smart Blonde* knits together the detection plot and the romance story as Torchy and Steve get engaged.

Once established, the plotting of the subsequent Torchy films is carefully designed to maintain the status of Torchy and Steve's relationship. Across the films their romantic relationship is repeatedly portrayed as competitive yet companionate. Their interplay is

comic: Steve is characterised as steady, warm and protective of Torchy, while her hunger for adventure and piquant dialogue leavens the familiarity of the relationship, refreshing the scenario even as it stays stable for the audience in each episode. However, the plotting is careful to extend and enhance their interplay as betrothed, but their arrival at the altar (or more accurately City Hall) to get married is delayed by carefully placed obstacles in each of the films.

For example, in *Fly-Away Baby* (#2 in the series) their work demands delay their wedding. The film opens with Torchy seeking Steve after he failed to meet her at the marriage license bureau. Delayed by a breaking murder case he tells Torchy: 'Murder and marriage don't mix', to which she furiously retorts: 'So, you put murder before matrimony, huh …. You're not a fiancé you're a bloodhound and you're wasting my time!'. In retaliation Torchy flies off to compete in a round-the-world race with two rival reporters. The couple is reunited late in the race, and the romance plotline points towards resolution as Torchy announces their wedding to her newspaper co-workers, but her editor Maxie (Raymond Hatton) contrives to keep his star reporter untethered, and the film concludes with Torchy departing to cover another story, in Chicago.

Closural delay, or the retardation of plot information (syuzhet) to spin out the overarching story (or fabula) is a typical feature of all narrative structures. As David Bordwell points out, the interaction of film viewers with the patterns of narrative possibility and an engagement in hypothesising depending upon the degree of information awarded by the film's narration constitutes the activity of sense making in film viewing.[10] However the interaction of progression and retardation is a particularly pronounced structuring feature in series narratives, and it provides a push-pull dynamic that is central to the balance between continuity and repetition. The repeated foreclosures of romantic resolution create a pressure of expectation about Torchy and Steve's relationship which productively and cumulatively

builds across the films in the series, but the frustration of the marriage is essential to maintaining the conditions of possibility of the storyworld that empowers Torchy as a free agent.

Torchy Blane, The Adventurous Blonde (#3 in the series) amps up the expectation of a wedding. The plot opens with Torchy receiving a telegram from Steve as she travels home on a train, the message sets a deadline – he will meet her at the train and has a Minister waiting to wed them – and functions within the patterning of the Torchy-Steve romance plot to simultaneously create an expectation of a delay. Sure enough, Steve's well-made plans are put awry by a group of reporters who, fearing that marrying Steve will give Torchy exclusive access to crime scoops, delay the wedding by inveigling Torchy and Steve in a fake murder case.

Preserving the Torchy Situation

In preserving the series situation between Torchy and Steve the Warner Bros. screenwriters implemented narrative conventions common to situational comedy in other media. In their work on comedy genres and formats, Steve Neale and Frank Krutnik trace the history of conventions in 'forms of repeatable narrative', such as radio, vaudeville and newspaper sketches of comical scenes from domestic life, all of which exhibit situational structures, and which they posit as precedents for the broadcast television sitcom, in which the conventions flourished within the format of a regular schedule.[11] Conventions of situational structure are shared by the Torchy series, in particular 'regular characters and setting', as well as a repeatable narrative mode of series storytelling. Neale and Krutnik's conception of the 'recurring situation' in sitcom is particularly applicable to the structuring of the series film:

> What the sit-com pivots around is a 'refamiliarising' of the recurring situation,

> protecting it and redefining it in the face of various disruptions and transgressions. The situation is not allowed to *change* but rather it is subjected to a recurring process of destabilisation-restabilisation in each episode.[12]

The strong imperative for stability in the foundational situation gives the sit-com a feeling of 'circularity',[13] and accounts for the common strategy of situating the storyworld within a frame that seems unchanging, or even confining, to the characters, such as domestic, familial or workplace settings. This aspect has been analysed by critics of sit-com as 'ideological', with a prevailing sense that the sit-com generates comedy out of a world defined by social, and gendered, constraints.[14] However, the innovation and invention in comedies of situation, which includes series films, lies in how comedy is produced precisely *from* these constraints, and the skilful and dynamic balance between narrative change and restabilisation. The intertwined crime-romance storylines of the Torchy films, and the competing drives from the workplace settings of the police headquarters and the newspaper offices, form the opposing magnetic poles of the narrative. As noted above, Torchy and Steve's wedding is recurrently, perpetually and even reflexively imminent, but as in sit-com the 'parameters' of the series' situation must be preserved: 'nothing that has happened in the narrative of the previous [episode] must destroy or complicate the way in which the situation is *grounded*'.[15]

The sit-com situation is predicated upon circularity in restabilising the parameters of the central situation within each episode. Neale and Krutnik also describe aspects of continuity present across episodes, noting the important functions of '"synchronising motifs"' such as 'regularly occurring bits of business, repeated situations and catchphrases' that appear across series, as well as 'the elaboration of a (more or less) an internal 'mythology' and hermeneutic for the series as a whole, particularly focussed by the perpetuity of certain characters'.[16] Alongside Torchy and Steve, the Torchy Blane storyworld is replete with familiar and recurrent characters who contribute to the series' 'synchronising motifis' and

create its 'internal mythology': the newspaper office is headed up by the acerbic editor Maxie, and the police station is populated by the acerbic Captain McTavish, a comically forgetful desk sergeant (George Guhl) and the amiable police driver, Gahagen, ably played by Tom Kennedy. Gahagen has regular and pleasurably predictable 'bits of business' in the series, such as his penchant for composing impromptu doggerel poetry, and his catch-phrase 'sirens and all?' Gahagen functions as a foil for Torchy and Steve's verbal sparring, and in some scenarios Torchy inveigles him (along with the police car he drives) as a co-conspirator enabling her schemes, much to Captain McTavish's annoyance. For example, in *Torchy Blane Runs for Mayor* (#8 in the series), Torchy leaves her regular employ at *The Star* newspaper when it refuses to run her stories on civic corruption. After trying, and failing, to get her scoop placed in other newspapers she eventually ends up at *The Blotter*, where she persuades the editor-owner Hogarth Ward (John Butler) to run and print her story. Torchy gets Gahagen to deliver the piles of print in one of the unit's police cars, and when Captain McTavish discovers Gahagen's misuse of police resources he demotes him from driver to a regular role in uniform.

Tom Kennedy's popularity and the skill of his comic performance as Gahagen was considered a strong enough box-office draw by Warner Bros. that his screen time was increased, and his character amplified in the two Torchy Blane films in which other performers replaced Glenda Farrell and Barton MacLane in the roles of Torchy and Steve. In *Torchy Blane in Panama* (#5 in the series) the main crime plot line is motivated by Gahagen, who witnesses a bank robbery. In *Torchy Blane, Plays with Dynamite* (the ninth, and final, film of the series) a comic sub-plot centres on a wrestling match, featuring Gahagen. The function of Gahagen/Kennedy as a 'synchronising motif', holding and providing continuity for the Torchy Blane storyworld, especially in the films in which different performers embodied Torchy (Jane Wyman) and Steve (Allen Jenkins), demonstrates the importance of

the secondary but recurrent characters in the series.

Torchy Blane: Dead or Alive? To Be (Dis)continued?

After the release of *Torchy Blane: Plays with Dynamite* (working title: '*Torchy Blane: Dead or Alive*') in 1939 Warner Bros. ceased to make the Torchy Blane adventures. Given the series' popularity and commercial value to the studio, how can we explain the demise of Torchy, and further, can the series truly be said to have 'finished'? Some commentators have attributed the end of the series directly to the departure of Glenda Farrell from the studio; Warner Bros did not renew Farrell's contract when it ceased in 1939 after *Torchy Runs for Mayor*, and she left the studio to work freelance, blending her screen work with performances on the Broadway stage and on radio.[17] A closer look at the studio's strategy towards the Torchy series, and female-centred series more widely, reveals that there were other reasons for Warner Bros. to discontinue the yarns of Torchy's sleuthing scoops.

Archived correspondence reveals that the studio was not wholly confident of its rights to exploit Torchy as a character. In January 1938, while *Torchy Blane in Panama* (#5 in the series) was in production the B-Unit team expressed concerns that Frederick Nebel had not been fully credited on the two previous Torchy films (*Blondes at Work*: #3, and *Adventurous Blond*e: #4 in the series)."[18] As noted earlier, Nebel *had* in fact assigned Warner Bros. the rights to his story 'No Hard Feelings' (adapted as the originating film of the series: *Smart Blonde*) in February 1936, along with rights to a further twenty five of his stories in December 1937.[19] In practice, the B-Unit screenwriting team made substantial changes to the source stories for the Torchy films: in *Smart Blonde* they substituted the vibrant and sassy Torchy for the world weary and hard-boiled male reporter Kennedy in Nebel's story. And some of the Torchy films later in the series were adapted from properties from authors other

than Nebel: for example, *Fly-Away Baby* was adapted from a story by Dorothy Kilgallen, and *Torchy Blane in Chinatown* was adapted from 'The Purple Hieroglyph'. However, the studio was *still* concerned as to its rights to make sequels from the stories, and particularly of the rights to recurrently feature characters created by Nebel. In April 1939 Roy Obringer sought definitive advice from the studio's legal team: 'I am of the opinion', he wrote, 'that we do not have the right to make sequels, and particularly with certain fixed characters as established by Nebel'.[20] In their reply the legal team confirmed Obringer's opinion, and advised that for the Torchy films a credit should be given to Nebel for 'his series of stories known as the "TORCHY BLANE STORIES"'.[21]

Whilst the studio was clarifying its position on rights in the background, production of *Torchy Plays With Dynamite*, featuring a new Torchy, forged ahead at Foy's B-Unit; the film was released in August 1939. Confidence in Wyman's ability to carry the central role was indicated in the announcement of further adventures to come, even before *Plays With Dynamite* was released. In May 1939 *Boxoffice* magazine reported that 'Torchy's Invitation to Murder' would be the next adventure starring Wyman and Allen.[22] The trade press were welcoming of Torchy's new embodiment: *Variety* wrote that Wyman 'clicks nicely' in the role,[23] *The Exhibitor* observed 'here is a vibrant piece of cops-and-robbers horseplay with the new Torchy fitting very capably into the well-worn shoes of her predecessor',[24] and *Showmen's Trade Review* opined that 'Jane fits into her role as though she had been born for it'.[25]

It seems that Wyman's proven potential for carrying a series character, combined with Warner Bros.' doubts to their series exploitation prompted them to manufacture a 'creative' compromise: the launch of a new female-centred series with a central situation nearly identical to the Torchy Blane series, but free from any issues about story rights. The studio released *Private Detective*, starring Wyman as Myrna 'Jinx' Winslow, a detective working

for a private agency and engaged to Jim Rickey, a police lieutenant (Dick Foran), in December 1939. Reviewers immediately noted the similarities: *Variety* wryly commented:

> Warners put the 'Torchy Blane' series into the garage for an overhauling and repaint job. 'Private Detective' has a new finish, but underneath it's plainly the 'Torchy' formula, with wider cruising range apparent than was the case in the girl reporter series.[26]

Similarly, *Hollywood Spectator* noted 'The ingredients are familiar… a young woman detective who consistently outwits her boy friend, a police detective, assigned to the same case – a la *Torchy Blaine* [sic]'.[27] In making a segue between the Torchy Blane Adventures, and a new female detective series, Foy's B-Unit were not only using the same ingredients, but also the same creative team: *Private Detective* was directed by Noel Smith (who directed *Torchy Plays with Dynamite*) and the screenplay was written by Earl Snell and Raymond Schrock. Snell had co-written *Torchy Runs for Mayor*, and *Torchy Plays with Dynamite*.

In discontinuing Torchy's adventures, but retaining aspects of a well-worn situation for their new character, female detective Jinx, Warner Bros. refreshed and relaunched an empowered female character, while retaining the advantages of a familiar formula. The new series offered novelty by tapping into a production trend for stories centred on female detectives that was building through 1939, a trend that included Warner Bros. Nancy Drew series, and launch of *The Adventures of Jane Arden* (Terry Morse, 1939), a series which was adapted from a regular cartoon strip and which, by featuring a female reporter, was imprinted by the Torchy template.[28]

Ultimately, neither *Private Detective*, nor *The Adventures of Jane Arden* gained a hold as successful series. While their characterisation and storyworlds capitalised on the currency of adventurous, empowered female protagonists, both series launched at a point when Warner Bros. was reorienting its production strategies. B-Film revenues had been

important in aiding the studio's recovery from the Depression of the 1930s, but at the turn of the decade the studio prioritised the production of higher budget films to exploit rising cinema attendances after the USA entered the war and Warner Bros. discontinued the Bryan Foy B-Film unit in 1940.[29]

Torchy Blane as a character, and as a series, had had strong currency during the B-boom of the 1930. Warners exploited well-honed skills in plotting and the writing of snappy dialogue and blended this with the performance skills and charisma of Glenda Farrell. The nine Torchy films showcase how industry, form, gender and representation interlocked for a brief period in the late 1930s, and demonstrate the currency of a vibrant and empowered female character.

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[1] Review of *Smart Blonde* Preview, *Variety*, 18 November, 1936.

[2] Warner Bros. advertisement for the Torchy Blane Stories, p. 28.

[3] On the box office returns of the Torchy films, see Mark Glancy, 'Warner Bros. Film Grosses 1921–1951, The William Schaefer Ledger', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, vol.15, no. 1. (1995), pp. 55–73.

[4] See Jeanine Basinger, 'Ladies Matinee,' *Film Comment* vol. 35, no. 6 (Nov/Dec 1999), pp. 27–28; Jennifer Forrest, 'The Poetics of Film Series', in Jennifer Forrest (ed.), *The Legend Returns and Dies Another Day: Essays on Film Series* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2008), pp. 21–38, and Jennifer Forrest 'The Trouble with Maisie: Insubordination and the Empowered Woman Series', in Jennifer Forrest (ed.), *The Legend Returns and Dies Another Day: Essays on Film Series* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2008), pp. 105–129; Philippa Gates, *Detecting Women: Gender and the Hollywood Detective Film*, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011), pp. 93–134; Verna Kale, 'The Girl Reporter Gets Her Man: The Threat and Promise of Marriage in His Girl Friday and Brenda Starr: Reporter', *The Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 47, no. 2,

(YEAR), pp. 341–360; Zoe Wallin, 'Girl Reporters and Cyclic Seriality', *Velvet Light Trap*, vol. 29, no. 1 (2017), pp. 50–66; and J. Madison Davis, 'Polly, Nancy and Torchy Crack the Case: Those Relentless Women Reporters', *World Literature Today*, vol. 92, no. 1 (2018), pp. 10–12.

[5] Brian Taves, 'The B Film: Hollywood's Other Half', in Tino Balio, *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930–1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Tino Balio, *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930–1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); and Kyle Edwards, '"Monogram Means Business": B-Film Marketing and Series Filmmaking at Monogram Pictures', *Film History*, vol. 23, no. 4 (2011), pp. 386–400.

[6] Balio, *Grand Design*, pp. 29–30.

[7] As noted in Thomas Schatz, *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era* (1988; London: Faber & Faber, 1998), p. 215 and Mark Glancy, 'Warner Bros. Film Grosses 1921–1951, The William Schaefer Ledger', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, vol.15, no. 1. (1995), pp. 55–73. For a discussion of B film production in the Poverty Row studios see Edwards, '"Monogram Means Business"', pp. 386-400.

[8] Philip K. Scheuer, 'Series Cycle Hits Hollywood', *Los Angeles Times*, 26 August, 1937, p. 8.

[9] Warner Bros. acquired the screen rights to 'No Hard Feelings' on 20 February 1936 as detailed in 'Agreement between Warner Bros. and Frederick Nebel, 20 February 1936', Torchy Blane Series Production Files, Folder 27813, University of Southern California Cinematic Arts Collections, Warner Bros. Archive [hereafter WBA].

[10] David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), pp. 38–39.

[11] Steve Neale and Frank Krutnik, *Popular Film and Television Comedy* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 227.

[12] Neale and Krutnik, p. 234.

[13] Neale and Krunik, p. 234.

[14] See Mick Eaton, 'Television Situation Comedy', *Screen*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 61–90 cited in Neale and Krutnik, p. 235 and p. 276 n. 98.

[15] Eaton, cited in Neale and Krutnik, p. 235.

[16] Neale and Krutnik, p. 235, citing Philip Drummond, 'Structural and narrative constraints and strategies in *The Sweeney*', *Screen Education*, no. 20 (August 1976), p. 19.

[17] Scott Nollen, *Glenda Farrell: Hollywood's Hardboiled Dame* (Baltimore and London: Midnight Marquee Press, 2014), p. 159.

[18] Interoffice Communication from Walter MacEwen [of the B-Unit] to Roy Obringer [Warner Bros.' Business Manager], January 27th, 1938. Folder 27812: Torchy Blane Series, WBA.

[19] Contract between Warner Bros. and Frederick Nebel, 22 December, 1937. Folder 27812: Torchy Blane Series, WBA.

[20] Letter from Roy Obringer to Mr W. G. Wallace, 11 April, 1939. Folder 27812: Torchy Blane Series, WBA.

[21] Letter from Mr W. G. Wallace to Roy Obringer, 26 April, 1939. Folder 27812: Torchy Blane Series, WBA.

[22] *Boxoffice*, 13 May, 1939, p. 29.

[23] *Daily Variety*, Review of *Torchy Blane… Plays With Dynamite*, 27 October, 1939, p. 3.

[24] *The Exhibitor*, New England Edition, Review of *Torchy Blane… Plays With Dynamite* 2 August, 1939, p. 15.

[25] *Showmen's Trade Review*, Review of *Torchy Blane… Plays With Dynamite*, 21 October,

1939 p. 17.

[26] *Variety,* Review of *Private Detective*, 6 December, 1939, p. 14.

[27] *Hollywood Spectator*, Review of *Private Detective,* 9 December, 1939, p. 9.

[28] Allardyce Nicoll, 'Quarterly Review of Trends for 1939' in *The Movies… And the People Who Make Them: A Continuing Survey of the Motion Picture in America* (PUBLICATION DETAILS), pp. 317–318.

[29] Schatz, *The Genius of the System*, p. 300. On the shifting production strategies at Warner Bros. during the 1930s and 1940s see Mark Glancy, 'Warner Bros. Film Grosses, 1921–1951: the William Schaefer Ledger', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1995), p. 63; and John Sedgewick and Michael Pokorny, 'The Risk Environment of Filmmaking: Warner Bros. in the Inter-War Years', *Explorations in Economic History*, vol. 35, no. 2 (1998), p. 219.